

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method for managing outbound message usage, comprising:
 - determining a count of each recipient for each outbound message associated with a client;
 - if the count of each recipient is at least equal to a limit over at least one period of time, providing a visual challenge to the client; and
 - if the provided visual challenge is unresolved, disabling the client's outbound message usage until the visual challenge is resolved, wherein the client's outbound message usage includes a message composed by the client before the providing of the visual challenge to the client, and wherein disabling the client's outbound message usage occurs prior to sending the composed message for the client over a network from a messaging system employed to originate each outbound message associated with the client, and wherein disabling the client's outbound message usage further includes disabling an ability of the client to send the composed message to the messaging system for sending to each recipient.
2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising if at least one outbound message associated with the client is indicative of spam for at least one recipient, providing the visual challenge to the client.
3. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the visual challenge further comprises an auditory challenge, and wherein until at least one of the visual challenge and the auditory challenge is resolved, disabling the client's outbound message usage.
4. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the visual challenge includes at least one Captcha test.
5. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the visual challenge further comprises an auditory challenge, and wherein the auditory challenge includes at least one sound clip

that is filtered to distort the playing of the sound clip for the auditory challenge.

6. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
determining another count for each attempt to resolve the visual challenge; and
if the other count for each attempt is at least equal to another limit, disabling the client's outbound message usage.

7. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising if the provided visual challenge is unresolved over a predetermined period of time, disabling the client's outbound message usage.

8. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising if the visual challenge is resolved, resetting the count for each recipient of each outbound message associated with the client.

9. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein a type of the message includes at least one type of email, blog, message board, Short Message Service (SMS), Multi-Media Message Service (MMS), and instant messaging (IM).

10. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising if the client's outbound message usage is disabled, providing instructions for an out of band communication by the client for re-enabling the client's outbound message usage.

11. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising employing a recipient count statement to determine the count for each recipient for each outbound message associated with the client, wherein the recipient count statement determines at least one of a current hour recipient count, a current daily recipient count, and a total recipient count.

12. (Currently Amended) A client for enabling management of outbound message usage, comprising:

a memory for storing instructions; and

a processor for enabling the processing of instructions to perform actions, including:

enabling a determination of a count of each recipient for each outbound message associated with the client;

if the count of each recipient is at least equal to a limit over at least one period of time, enabling a visual challenge to be provided to the client; and

if the provided visual challenge is unresolved, enabling a disablement of the client's outbound message usage until the visual challenge is resolved, wherein the client's disabled outbound message usage includes [[an]] disabling the client's ability to send a message composed by the client to an outbound message server before the visual challenge is enabled to be provided to the client, and wherein enabling [[a]] the disablement of the client's outbound message usage occurs without employing [[the]] an ability of the outbound message server to send the composed message for the client over a network from [[an]] the outbound message server employed by the client to originate each outbound message associated with the client.

13. (Original) The client of Claim 12, wherein the actions further comprise if at least one outbound message associated with the client is indicative of spam for at least one recipient, enabling the visual challenge to be provided to the client.

14. (Original) The client of Claim 12, wherein the visual challenge further comprises an auditory challenge, and wherein until at least one of the visual challenge and the auditory challenge is resolved, disabling the client's outbound message usage.

15. (Original) The client of Claim 12, wherein the actions further comprise:

enabling a determination of another count for each attempt to resolve the visual challenge; and

if the other count for each attempt is at least equal to another limit, enabling a disablement of the client's outbound message usage.

16. (Original) The client of Claim 12, wherein the actions further comprise if the provided visual challenge is unresolved over a predetermined period of time, enabling a disablement of the client's outbound message usage.

17. (Original) The client of Claim 12, wherein the actions further comprise if the visual challenge is resolved, enabling a resetting of the count for each recipient of each outbound message associated with the client.

18. (Original) The client of Claim 12, wherein a type of the message includes at least one type of email, blog, message board, Short Message Service (SMS), Multi-Media Message Service (MMS), and instant messaging (IM).

19. (Original) The client of Claim 12, wherein the actions further comprise if the client's outbound message usage is disabled, providing instructions for an out of band communication by the client for re-enabling the client's outbound message usage.

20. (Original) The client of Claim 12, wherein the actions further comprise enabling a recipient count statement to determine the count for each recipient for each outbound message associated with the client, wherein the recipient count statement determines at least one of a current hour recipient count, a current daily recipient count, and a total recipient count.

21. (Currently Amended) A server for enabling management of outbound message usage, comprising:

a memory for storing instructions; and

a processor for enabling the processing of instructions to perform actions, including:

enabling a determination of a count of each recipient for each outbound message associated with a client;

if the count of each recipient is at least equal to a limit over at least one period of time, enabling a visual challenge to be provided to the client; and

if the provided visual challenge is unresolved, enabling a disablement of the client's outbound message usage until the visual challenge is resolved, wherein the outbound message usage comprises originating each outbound message associated with the client from the computer over a network coupled to the computer, and wherein enabling [[a]] the disablement of the client's outbound message usage disables an ability by the client to send each outbound message from the client to another client, and prevents the sending [[an]] of each outbound message associated with the recipient count that enabled the providing of the visual challenge.